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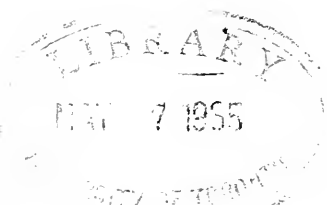
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THE LADY OF LYONS;

OR, LOVE AND PRIDE.

A PLAY, IN FIVE ACTS.—BY SIR EDWARD LYTTON BULWER.



Dramatis Personæ.

[See page 11.

As First Performed at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

BEAUSEANT (a rich gentleman of Lyons, in love with, and refused by, Pauline Deschappelles), Mr. Itton.

GLAVIS (his friend, also a rejected suitor to Pauline), Mr. Meadows.

COLONEL, afterwards GENERAL, DAMAS (cousin of Madame Deschappelles, and an officer in the French army), Mr. Bartley.

MONSIEUR DESCHAPPELLES (a Lyonsese merchant, father to Pauline), Mr. Strickland.

LANDLORD OF THE GOLDEN LION, Mr. Yarnold.

GASPAR, Mr. Didear.

CLAUDE MELNOTTE, Mr. Macready.

First Officer } Messrs. Howe, Pritchard, and
Second Officer }
Third Officer } Roberts.

Servants, Notary, &c.

MADAME DESCHAPPELLES, Mrs. Clifford.

PAULINE (her daughter), Miss Helen Fancit.

THE WIDOW MELNOTTE (mother to Claude), Mrs. Griffith.

JANET (the innkeeper's daughter), Mrs. East.

MARIAN (maid to Pauline), Miss Garrick.

Scene—Lyons and the neighbourhood. Time—1795—1798.

No. 188.—Dicks' Standard Plays.

COSTUMES.

DEAUSEANT.—*1st dress*: Brown riding frock with cape—striped silk waistcoat—brown cloth breeches—striped silk stockings—shoes—steep crowned hat with broad brim—hair rather long—white cravat.
2nd dress: Blue body coat of the period—unkeen breeches—white silk stockings &c.,—three-cornered hat.

GLAVIS.—*1st dress*: Purple coat—striped waistcoat—silk breeches—stockings—three-cornered hat.
2nd dress: striped silk long tailed-coat—cravat.

DAMAS.—*1st dress*: Blue broad-skirted coat—epaulets—leather breeches—top boots with brown leather tops—andress cap—iron grey hair—moustache—cane. *2nd dress*: Three-cornered hat, and white and red feathers—sword and sabretache—tri-coloured sash.

DESCHAPPELLES.—Embroidered coat—waistcoat—black silk breeches and stockings—powdered hair.
2nd dress: Plain plumb coloured cloth suit.

LANDLORD.—Cloth coat, waistcoat and breeches—striped stockings and shoes—apron.

OFFICERS.—Dark blue body coats with broad skirts—epaulets—swords—three-cornered laced hats with tri-coloured cockades—light breeches—top boots.

GASPAR.—Blue blouse, loose trousers, and French cap.

CLAUDE.—*1st dress*: Light blouse—belt—white gaiters and trousers. *2nd dress*: Embroidered body coat with broad skirts—satin breeches—white silk stockings and shoes with buckles—powdered hair and gold laced three-cornered hat. *3rd dress*: Travelling cloak. *4th dress*: Same as first dress. *5th dress*: Full uniform, same as Damas, long hair.

MADAM.—Handsome striped silk dress—powder. *2nd dress*: Travelling mantle and hat. *3rd dress*: Silk dress.

PAULINE.—*1st dress*: Handsome light silk dress—sash—lace scarf. *2nd dress*: Plain muslin.

WIDOW.—French widow's cap—black dress—white apron.

JANET.—Striped French dress.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R.

R.C.

C.

L.C.

L.

* * * The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.

* * * Those passages marked with inverted commas, are omitted in the representation.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A room in the house of M. Deschappelles.*
(Door of Entrance, L. v. E.) PAULINE, standing on a sofa, R. v. E. MARIAN, her aunt, is fastening her hair. — PAULINE is and notes of a bell, outside the sofa. — MADAME DESCHAPPELLE, seated, L. c. — The gardeners are seen from the porch behind. Pauline is looking at a bouquet which she holds.

Madame Deschap. Marian, put that rose a little more to the left. — *Marian alters the position, and rises in Pauline's hair.* — Ah, so! — that improves the air, — the bouquet, — the je ne sais quoi! You are certainly very hand-ome, child, in my style! — I don't wonder that you make such a sensation! — Old, young, rich, and poor, all come to the Beauty of Lyons! — Ah, we live again in our children, — especially when they have our eyes and complexion!

Pauline. (Loudly.) Dear mother, you spoil your Pauline! — *(Aside.)* I wish I knew who sent me these flowers!

Madame Deschap. No, child! — If I praise you, it is only to inspire you with a proper ambition. — You are born to make a great marriage! — Beauty is valuable or worthless according as you invest the property to the best advantage. — Marian go and order the carriage!

(Exit MARIAN, L. v. E.)

Pauline. Who can it be that sends me, every day, these beautiful flowers? — But where are they?

Enter SERVANT, L. v. E.

Servant. Monsieur Beausant, Madam.

Madame Deschap. Let him enter! *(Exit servant, L. v. E.)* — Pauline, this is another offer! — I know it is! — Your father should engage a good libellist clerk to keep the account-book of your conquests.

Enter BEAUSANT, L. v. E.

Beau. Ah, ladies, how fortunate I am to find you at home! — *(Aside.)* How lovely she looks! — It is a great sacrifice I make in marrying into a family in trade! — they will be eternally grateful! *(Coming down, to c.)* — *(Loud.)* Madame, you will permit me a word with your charming daughter. — *(Approaches Pauline, who rises disdainfully and comes down R.)* — Mademoiselle, I have ventured to wait upon you, in a hope that you must long since have divined. Last night, when you outshone all the beauty of Lyons, you compelled your conquest over me! You know that my fortune is not exceeded by any estate in the province — you know that, but for the Revolution, which has defrauded me of my titles, I should be noble. May I, then, trust that you will not reject my address? I offer you my hand and heart. *(This is spoken with a patronizing air.)*

Pauline. (Aside.) He has the air of a man who confers a favour! — *(Aloud.)* Sir, you are very condescending! — I thank you humbly — but I am fully sensible of my own demerits, you must allow me to decline the honour you propose.

(Curtseys, and bows, L. v. E.)

Beau. Decline! impossible! — you are not serious! — Madame, suffer me to appeal to you. I am a suitor for your daughter's hand — the attentions shall be worthy her beauty and my station. May I wait on M. Deschappelles?

Madame Deschap. M. Deschappelles never antedore in the domestic arrangements, you are very obliging! If you were still a Marquis, or if his daughter were intended to marry a commoner, why, perhaps, we might give you the preference!

Beau, c. A commoner! — we are all commoners in France now.

Madame Deschap. L. c. In France, yes; but there is a nobility still left in the other countries in Europe. We are quite aware of your good qualities, and I don't doubt that you will find some lady more suitable to your pretensions. We shall be always happy to see you as an acquaintance. M. Beauant! — My dear child, the carriage will be here presently. *(Curtseys to Pauline.)*

Beau. (L.) Say no more, Madame! — say no more! — *(Aside.)* Refused! and by a merchant's daughter! — refused! It will be all over Lyons before sunset! — I will go and bury myself in my chateaux, study philosophy, and turn woman-hater. Refused! They ought to be sent to a madhouse! — La! I have the honour to wish you a very good morning.

(Exit L. v. E.)

Madame Deschap. How forward these men are! — I think, child, we kept up our dignity. Any girl, however inexperienced, knows how to accept an offer, but it requires a vast deal of address to refuse one with proper modesty and disdain. I used to practise it at school with the dancing master!

Enter DAMAS, L. v. E.

Damas. (c.) Good morning cousin Deschappelles! — Will, Pauline, are you recovered from last night's ball? — So many triumphs must be very fatiguing. Even M. Glavis sighed most piteously when you departed; — but that might be the effect of the supper.

Pauline. (R.) M. Glavis, indeed!

Madame Deschap. (L. c.) M. Glavis? — as if my daughter would think of M. Glavis!

Damas. (c.) Hey-day! — why not? — His father left him a very pretty fortune, and his birth is higher than yours, cousin Deschappelles. But perhaps you are looking to M. Beausant, — his father was a marquis before the Revolution.

Pauline. (R.) M. Beausant! — Cousin, you delight in tormenting me!

(Curtseys to L., and up c.)

Madame Deschap. Don't mind him, Pauline! — Cousin Damas, you have no susceptibility of feeling, — there is a certain indolence in all your ideas. — M. Beausant knows already that he is no match for my daughter!

Damas. Pooh! pooh! one would think you intended your daughter to marry a prince!

Madame Deschap. Well, and if I did? — what then? — Many a foreign prince —

Damas. (Interrupting her.) Foreign prince? Foreign fiddlestick! — you ought to be ashamed of such nonsense at your time of life.

Madame Deschap. My time of life! — That is an expression never applied to any lady till she is sixty-nine and three-quarters! — and only then by the clergyman of the parish.

Enter SERVANT, L. v. E.

Servant. Madam, the carriage is at the door.

(Exit L. v. E.)

Madame Deschap. (To Pauline.) Come,

child, put on your bonnet—you really have a very thoroughbred air—not at all like your poor father.—(fondly) Ah, you little coquette! when a young lady is always making mischief, it is a sure sign that she takes after her mother!

(Damas assists Pauline on with scarf.)

Pauline. Good day, cousin Damas—and a better honour to you.—(Goes back to the table and taking the flowers.) Who could have sent me these flowers?

(Enter Pauline and Madame Deschappelles L. U. E.)

Damas (R.) That would be an excellent girl if her head had not been turned. I fear she is now become incorrigible! Zounds, what a lucky fellow I am to be still a bachelor! They may talk of the devotion of the sex—but the most faithful attachment in life is that of a woman in love—with herself! [Exit L. U. E.]

SCENE II.—The exterior of a small Village Inn—L. in flat, seen, the Golden Lion a few leagues from Lyons, which is seen at a distance. R.

Beauscant (Behind the scenes. R.) Yes, you may bait the horses, we shall rest here an hour.

Enter BEAUSCANT and GLAVIS. R. 2 E.

Glavis. (R. C.) Really my dear Beauscant, consider that I have promised to spend a day or two with you at your chateau—that I am quite at your mercy for my entertainment—and yet you are as silent and as gloomy as a mule at a funeral, or an Englishman at a party of pleasure.

Beau. (C.) Bear with me!—the fact is, that I am miserable.

Glavis. You—the richest and gayest bachelor in Lyons?

Beau. It is because I am a bachelor—that I am miserable.—Thou knowest Pauline—the only daughter of the rich merchant, Mons. Deschappelles?

Glavis. Know her!—who does not?—as pretty as Venus and as proud as Juno.

Beau. Her taste is worse than her pride.—(Drawing himself up.) Know, Glavis, she has actually refused me! (Crosses to R.)

Glavis. (Aside) So she has me!—very consoling! In all cases of heartache, the application of another man's disappointment draws out the pain and allays the irritation.—(Aloud.) Refused you! and wherefore?

Beau. I know not, unless it be because the Revolution swept away my father's title of Marquis,—and she will not marry a commoner. Now, as we have no noblemen left in France,—as we are all citizens and equals, she can only hope that, in spite of the war, some English Milord or German Count will risk his life, by coming to Lyons, that this *gilt du Roturier* may condescend to accept him. Refused me, and with scorn!—By heaven, I'll not submit to it tamely!—I'm in a perfect fever of mortification and rage.—(Refuses me, indeed!) (Crosses to L.)

Glavis. Be comforted, my dear fellow,—I will tell you a secret. For the same reason she refused me!

Beau. You!—that's a very different matter! But give me your hand, Glavis, we'll think of some plan to humble her. *Mille Diabes!* I

should like to see her married to a strolling player!

Enter LANDLORD and his daughter JANET, from the Inn door in flat, L. C.

Landlord. Your servant, citizen Beauscant,—servant, sir. Perhaps you will take dinner before you proceed to your chateau; ourarder is most plentifully supplied.

Beau. I have no appetite.

Glavis. Nor I. Still it is bad travelling on an empty stomach. What have you got?

(Crosses to L. C.—takes and looks over the bill of fare.)

(Shout without!)—"Long live the Prince!—Long live the Prince!"

Beau. The Prince!—what Prince is that? I thought we had no princes left in France.

Landlord. (Up C., and looking off R.) Ha, ha! the lads always call him Prince. He has just won the prize in the shooting-match, and they are taking him home in triumph.

Beau. Him! and who's Mr. Him?

Landlord. Who should he be but the pride of the village, Claude Melnotte?—Of course you have heard of Claude Melnotte?

Glavis. (Giving back the bill of fare to Janet, L.) Never had that honour. Soup—ragout of hare—roast chicken, and, in short, all you have!

[Exit Janet L. C.]

Beau. (R.) The son of old Melnotte, the gardener?

Landlord. (C.) Exactly so—a wonderful young man.

Beau. How wonderful?—Are his cabbages better than other people's?

Landlord. Nay, he don't garden any more; his father left him well off. He's only a genius.

Glavis. A what?

Landlord. A genius!—a man who can do everything in life except anything that's useful;—that's a genius.

Beau. You raise my curiosity;—proceed.

Landlord. Well, then, about four years ago, old Melnotte died and left his son well to do in the world. We then all observed that a great change came over young Claude. He took to reading and Latin, and hired a professor from Lyons, who had so much in his head that he was forced to wear a great full-bottom wig to cover it. Then he took a fencing-master, and a dancing-master, and a music-master; and then he learned to paint; and at last it was said that young Claude was to go to Paris, and set up for a painter. The lads laughed at him at first; but he is a stont fellow, is Claude, and as brave as a lion, and soon taught them to laugh the wrong side of their mouths; and now all the boys swear by him, and all the girls pray for him.

Beau. A promising youth, certainly! And why do they call him Prince?

Landlord. Partly because he is at the head of them all, and partly because he has such a proud way with him, and wears such fine clothes—and, in short, looks like a prince.

Beau. And what could have turned the foolish fellow's brain? The Revolution, I suppose?

Landlord. Yes—the Revolution that turns us all topsy-turvy—the revolution of Love.

Beau. Romantic young Corydon! And with whom is he in love?

Landlord. Why—but it is a secret, gentlemen.

Beau. Oh! certainly.

Landlord. Why, then, I hear from his mother, good soul! that it is no less a person than the Beauty of Lyons, Pauline Deschappelles.

Beau. and Glavis. Ha! ha!—capital!

Landlord. You may laugh, but it is as true as I stand here.

Beau. And what does the Beauty of Lyons say to his suit?

Landlord. Lord, sir, she never even condescended to look at him, though when he was a boy he worked in her father's garden.

Beau. Are you sure of that?

Landlord. His mother says that Mademoiselle does not know him by sight.

(Goes into house as if called.)

Beau. (taking Glavis aside). I have hit it, —I have it;—here is our revenge! Here is a prince for our languid damsel. Do you take me?

Glavis. Dence take me if I do!

Beau. Blockhead!—it's as clear as a map. What if we could make this elegant clown pass himself off as a foreign prince?—lend him money, clothes, equipage for the purpose?—make him propose to Pauline?—marry Pauline? Would it not be delicious?

Glavis. Ha! ha!—Excellent! But how shall we support the necessary expenses of his highness? (Re-enter Landlord, and waits behind L. C.)

Beau. Pshaw! Revenge is worth a much larger sacrifice than a few hundred louis;—as for details, my valet is the trustiest fellow in the world, and shall have the appointment of his highness's establishment. Let's go to him at once, and see if he be really this Admirable Crichton.

(Going up R.)

Glavis. Will all my heart;—but the dinner?

Beau. Always thinking of dinner! Hark ye, Landlord, how far is it to young Melnotte's cottage? I should like to see such a prodigy.

Landlord. Turn down the lane, then strike across the common, —and you will see his mother's cottage.

Beau. True, he lives with his mother.—(Aside.) We will not trust to an old woman's discretion; better send for him hither. I'll just step in and write him a note. Come, Glavis. (Crosses to L.)

[Exit Landlord, L. C.]

Glavis. Yes, —Beanseant, Glavis, and Co., manufacturers of princes, wholesale and retail,—an uncommonly genteel line of business. But why so grave?

Beau. You think only of sport,—I of the revenge.

[Exit within the Inn, L. C.]

SCENE III.—The interior of Melnotte's cottage; flowers placed here and there; a guitar on an oaken table, with a portfolio, &c.; a picture on an easel, (c. up stage) covered by a curtain; fencing-foils crossed over the mantelpiece; an attempt at arrangement in spite of the homeliness of the furniture, &c.; a staircase to the L. conducts to the upper storey; practicable window, L. c.

(Shout without, R. C.)—"Long live Claude Melnotte!" "Long live the Prince!"

The Widow Mel. (coming down stairs). Hark!—there's my dear son;—carried off the prize, I'm sure; and now he'll want to treat them all.

(Claude Mel. in R. C.). What! you would, my friends! Well, well, there's a trifle to me! merry elsewhere. Good day to you all, good day!

(Shout.)—"Hurrah! Long live Claude Melnotte!"

Enter CLAUDE MELNOTTE, (with a rifle in his hand, down R. C.)

Mel. Give me joy, dear mother! I've won the prize! never missed one shot. Is it not laughable, this gun?

Widow. Humph!—Well, what is it worth, Claude?

Mel. Worth! What is a riband worth to a soldier? Worth! everything! Glory is priceless!

Widow. Leave glory to great folks. Ah! Claude, Claude, castles in the air cost a vast deal to keep up! How is all this to end? What good does it do thee to learn Latin, and sing songs, and play on the guitar, and fence, and dance, and paint pictures? All very fine; but what does it bring in?

Mel. Wealth! wealth, my mother!—Wealth to the mind—wealth to the heart—high thoughts—bright dreams—the hope of fame—the ambition to be worthier to love Pauline.

Widow. My poor son!—The young lady will never think of thee.

Mel. Do the stars think of us? Yet if the prisoner see them shine into his dungeon, would he then bid him turn away from *these* lustre? Even so from this low cell, poverty, I lift my eyes to Pauline and forget my chains. (Goes to the picture, and draws aside the curtain.) See, this is her image—painted from memory. Oh, how the canvas wrongs her!—Takes up the brush and flours it aside.)—I shall never be a painter! I can paint no likeness but one, and that is above all art. I would turn soldier—France needs soldiers! But to leave the air that Pauline breathes! What is the hour?—looks at the clock—so late! I will tell thee a secret mother. Then knowest that for the last six weeks I have sent every day the rarest flowers to Pauline?—she wears them. I have seen them on her breast. Ah, and then the whole universe seemed filled with odours! I have now grown more bold—I have poured my worship into poetry—I have sent the verses to Pauline. I have signed them with my own name. My messenger ought to be back by this time. I bade him wait for the answer.

Widow. And what answer do you expect, Claude?

Mel. That which the Queen of Navarre sent to the poor troubadour:—"Let me see the Orache that can tell naught I am beloved!" She will admit me. I shall hear her speak—I shall meet her eyes—I shall read upon her cheek the sweet thoughts that translate themselves into blishes. Then—then, oh, then—she may forget that I am the peasant's son!

Widow. Nay, if she will but hear thee talk, Claude?

Mel. I foresee it all. She will tell me that desert is the true rank. She will give me a badge—a flower—a glove! Oh rapture! I shall join the armies of the Republic—I shall rise—I shall win a name that beauty will not blush to hear. I shall return with the right to say to her—"See, how love does not level the proud, but raise the humble!" Oh, how my heart swells within me!

Oh, what glorious Prophecy of the Future are Youth and Hope! *(Knock at the door.)*
 Widow. Come in! *(Goes up.)*

Enter GASPAR door R. C., and goes down to R.

Mel. Welcome, Gaspar, welcome. Where is the letter? Why do you turn away, man? where is the letter? *(Gaspar gives him one.)* This! This is mine, the one I entrusted to thee! Didst thou not leave it?

Gaspar. Yes, I left it.

Mel. *(R. C.)* My own verses returned to me. Nothing else?

Gaspar. There will be proud to hear how thy messenger was honoured. For thy sake, Melotte, I have borne that which no Frenchman can bear without disgrace.

Mel. Disgrace, Gaspar! Disgrace?

Gaspar. I gave the letter to the porter, who passed thy letter from lackey to lackey till it reached the lady it was meant for.

Mel. It reached her, then; you are sure of that? It reached her, well, well!

Gaspar. It reached her, and was returned to me with blows. Dost hear, Melotte? with blows! Dost! are we slaves still, that we are to be thus dealt with, we peasants?

Mel. With blows? No, Gaspar, no; Not blows!

Gaspar. I could show thee the marks if it were not so less a shame to bear them. The lackey who delivered thy letter into the mire swore that he had and her mother never were so insulted. What could thy letter contain, Claude?

Mel. *(Unfolding the letter.)* Not a line that a serf might not have written to an empress. No, not one.

Gaspar. They promised with the same greeting they gave me if thou wilt pass that way. Shall we venture this, Claude?

Mel. *(Unfolding Gaspar's hand.)* Forgive me, the fault was mine; I have brought this on thee; I will not forget it; thou shalt be avenged! The heartless insolence!

Gaspar. Then art moved, Melotte; think not of me; I would go through fire and water to serve thee; but—a blow! It is not the bruise that galls—it is the blush, Melotte.

Mel. Say, what misgave?—How insulted?—Wherefore?—What the offence?

Gaspar. Did you not write to Pauline Deschappelle, the daughter of the rich merchant?

Mel. Well?

Gaspar. And are you not a peasant—a gardener's son?—that was the offence. Sleep on it, Melotte. Blows to a French citizen, blows!

(Exit D. R. C.)

Widow. Now you are served, Claude!

Mel. *(Unfolding the letter.)* So do I gather her name to the winds. I will stop her by the open street—I will insult her. I will beat her mental organs. I will—*(Looks suddenly to widow.)* Mother, my hump-backed deformity—hideous?

Widow. You!

Mel. A coward—a thief—a liar?

Widow. You!

Mel. Or a dull fool—a vain, drivelling, brainless idiot?

Widow. No, no.

Mel. What am I then—worse than all these? Why, I am a peasant! What has a peasant to do with love? Vain Revelations, why lavish your

energy on the great? Oh that we—we, the hewers of wood and drawers of water, had but swept away, so that the proud might learn what the world would be without us!—

(Knock at the door.)

Enter LANDLORD from the Inn, door R. C.

Land. A letter for Citizen Melotte.

Mel. A letter! from her perhaps—who sent thee?

Land. Why, Monsieur—I mean Citizen—Beauseant, who stops to dine at the Golden Lion, on his way to his chateau.

Mel. Beauseant!—*(Reads.)* “Young man, I know thy secret—thou lovest above thy station; if thou hast wit, courage, and discretion, I can secure to thee the realization of thy most sanguine hopes; and the sole condition I ask in return is, that thou shalt be steadfast to thine own ends. I shall demand from thee a solemn oath to marry her whom thou lovest; to bear her to thine home on thy wedding night. I am serious—it thou wouldst learn more, lose not a moment, but follow the bearer of this letter to thy friend and patron,—CHARLES BEAUSEANT.” Can I believe my eyes? Are our own passions the sorcerers that raise up for us spirits of good or evil? I will go instantly.

[Exit Landlord at the door R. C.]

Widow. What is this, Claude?

(Widow goes slowly upstairs, seeing her does not attend to her.)

Mel. “Marry her whom thou lovest”—“bear her to thine own home.”—O, revenge and love; which of you is the stronger?—*(Gazing on the picture.)* Sweet face, thou smilest on me from the canvas; weak fool that I am, do I then love her still? No, it is the vision of my own romance that I have worshipped; it is the reality to which I bring scorn for scorn. Adieu, mother; I will return anon. My brain reels—the earth swims before me.—*(Looks again at the letter.)* No, it is not a mockery; I do not dream!

[Exit door R. C.]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—THE GARDENS OF M. DESCHAPPELLES' House at Lyons.—The House seen at the back of the stage on a terrace, L.; marble steps to the stage.

Enter BEAUSEANT and GLAVIS, L. 3. E.

Beau. *(R. C.)* Well, what think you of my plot? Has it not succeeded to a miracle? The instant that I introduced His Highness the Prince of Como to the pompous mother and the scornful daughter, it was all over with him; he came—he saw—he conquered; and, though it is not many days since he arrived, they have already promised him the hand of Pauline.

Glavis. It is lucky, though, that you told them His Highness travelled incognito, for fear the Dir story (who are not very fond of princes) should lay him by the heels; for he has a wonderful wish to keep up his rank, and scatters our gold about with as much coolness as if he were watering his own flower-pots.

Beau. True, he is damnedly extravagant; I

think the sly dog does it out of malice. However, it must be owned that he reflects credit on his loyal subjects, and makes a very pretty figure in his fine clothes, with my diamond snuff-box—

Glavis. And my diamond ring! But do you think he will be firm to the last? I fancy I see symptoms of relenting: he will never keep up his rank if he once let out his conscience.

Beau. His oath binds him; he cannot retract without being forsworn, and those low fellows are always superstitious! But, as it is, I tremble lest he be discovered; that bluff Colonel Damas (*Madame Deschappelles'* cousin) evidently suspects him. We must make haste and conclude the farce; I have thought of a plan to end it this very day.

Glavis. This very day! Poor Pauline, her dream will be soon over.

Beau. Yes, this day they shall be married; this evening, according to his oath, he shall carry his bride to the Golden Lion, and then pomp, equipage, retinue, and title, all shall vanish at once; and her Highness the Princess shall find that she has refused the son of a marquis to marry the son of a gardener.—(*Glavis goes up.*)—Oh, Pauline! once loved, now hated, yet still not relinquished, thou shalt drain the cup to the dregs,—thou shalt know what it is to be humbled!

(*Goes up R., muttering and hooting, as enter from the house, Madame Deschappelles, fanning herself; Colonel Damas; then Melnotte, as the Prince of Como, leading in Pauline; Beau-seant and Glavis bow respectfully. Pauline and Melnotte walk apart.*)

Madame Deschap. (R. c.) Good morning, gentlemen; really, I am so fatigued with laughter; the dear Prince is so entertaining. What wit he has! Any one may see that he has spent his whole life in courts.

Damas. (R.) And what the dence do you know about courts, cousin Deschappelles? You women regard men just as you buy books—you never care about what is in them, but how they are bound and lettered. S'dearth, I don't think you would even look at your Bible if it had not a title to it.

Madame Deschap. How coarse you are, cousin Damas!—quite the manners of a barrack—you don't deserve to be one of our family; really, we must drop your acquaintance when Pauline marries. I cannot patronize any relations that would discredit my future son-in-law, the Prince of Como.

Mel. (*Advancing c.*) These are beautiful gardens, Madame (*Beausant and Glavis retire*)—who planned them?

Madame Deschap. A gardener named Melnotte, your highness—an honest man who knew his station. I can't say as much for his son—a presuming fellow, who—ha! ha! actually wrote verses—such doggerel!—to my daughter.

Pauline. (C.) Yes, how you would have laughed at them, Prince!—you who write such beautiful verses!

Mel. This Melnotte must be a monstrous impudent person!

Damas. (R.) Is he good-looking?

Madame Deschap. I never notice such *canaille*—an ugly, mean-looking clown, if I remember right.

Damas. (R.) Yet I heard your porter say he was wonderfully like his Highness.

Mel. (*Taking snuff, L. c.*) You are complimentary.

Madame Deschap. For shame, cousin Damas!—like the Prince, indeed!

Pauline. (R. c.) Like you! Ah, mother, like our beautiful Prince! I'll never speak to you again, cousin Damas. (*They go up singing.*)

Mel. (*Aside.*) Humph!—rank is a great beautifier! I never passed for an Apollo while I was a peasant; if I am so handsome as a prince, what should I be as an emperor?—(*Aloud.*) Monsieur Beausant, will you honour me? (*Others snuff.*)

Beau. (L.) No, your Highness; I have no small views.

Mel. Nay, if it were a vice you'd be sure to have it, Monsieur Beausant.

Madame Deschap. Ha! ha!—how very severe!—what wit!

Beau. (*In a rage and aside, L.*) Curse his impertinence!

Madame Deschap. (c.) What a superb snuff-box!

Pauline. (R. c.) And what a beautiful ring!

Mel. (L. c.) You like the box—a trifle—interesting, perhaps, from associations—a present from Louis XIV. to my great-great-grandmother. Honour me by accepting it.

(*Madame curtseys and crosses to R. Glavis laughing aside.*)

Beau. (*Plucking him by the sleeve.*) How!—what the devil! My box—are you mad? It is worth five hundred louis.

(*Goes up the stage angrily.*)

Mel. (*Unheeding him, and turning to Pauline.*) And you like this ring? Ah, it has, indeed, a lustre since your eyes have shone on it (*Placing it on her finger.*) Henceforth hold me, sweet enchantress, the Slave of the Ring.

(*Glavis. L. Crosses to, and pulling his sleeve.*) Stay, stay—what are you about? My mailoanunt's legacy—a diamond of the first water. You shall be hanged for swindling, sir.

(*Crosses to L. corner.*)

Mel. (*Pretending not to hear.*) It is curious, this ring; it is the one with which my grandfather, the doge of Venice, married the Adriatic!

(*Madame and Pauline examine the ring and retire up.*)

Mel. (*to Beau and Glavis.*) Fie, gentlemen, princes must be generous?—(*Turns to Damas, who is R. watching them closely.*) These kind friends have my interest so much at heart, that they are as careful of my property as if it were their own!

Beau and Glavis. (*Confusedly L. c.*) Ha, ha!—very good joke that!

(*Appears to remonstrate with Melnotte in dumb show.*)

Damas. What's all that whispering? I am sure there is some jangle here: hang me, if I think he is an Italian after all. Gad! I'll try him. *Scrivatore nullissimo, Eccellenza.**

(*Crosses to c.*)

Mel. (*Aside.*) Hum—what does he mean, I wonder?

Damas. Godò di vedervi in buona salute.†

Mel. Hem—hem!

Damas. Fa bel tempo—che si dice di nuovo?‡

* Your Excellency's most humble servant.

† I am glad to see you in good health.

‡ Fine weather. What news is there?

Mel. Well, Sir, what's all that gibberish?

Damas. Oh, oh!—only Italian, your Highness!
(Melotte confused.)—The Prince of Como does not understand his own language!

Mel. Not as you pronounce it,—who the deuce could?

(Damas goes up and down stage in a passion, the others laugh heartily.)

Madame Deschap. Ha! ha! cousin Damas, never pretend to what you don't know.

(Damas goes up stage and down again.)

Pauline. Ha! ha! cousin Damas; you speak Italian, indeed!

(Makes a mocking gesture at him.)

(Damas goes up.)

Dean. (to Glaris.) Clever dog!—how ready!

Glaris. (L.) Ready, yes; with my diamond ring!—Damn his readiness!

Damas. (Comes down c.) Laugh at me!—laugh at a Colonel in the French army;—the fellow's an impostor; I know he is. I'll see if he understands fighting as well as he does Italian—(Goes up to him, they come down to him, aside.) Sir, you are a jackanapes!—Can you construe that?

Mel. (Calmly.) No, sir; I never construe affronts in the presence of ladies; by-and-by I shall be happy to take a lesson—or give one.

Damas. I'll find the occasion never fear!

(Going L. 3. E.)

Madame Deschap. Where are you going, cousin?

Damas. To correct my Italian. [Exit L. U. E.]

Beau. (to Glaris.) Let us after and pacify him; he evidently suspects something.

(Going L., up together.)

Glaris. (Aside to him.) Yes!—but my diamond ring!

Beau. And my box!—We are over-taxed fellow-subjects!—we must stop the supplies, and dethrone the Prince.

Glaris. Prince!—he ought to be heir-apparent to King Stork!

[Exit Beau and Glaris, L. 3. E.]

Madame Deschap. Dare I ask your Highness to forgive my cousin's insufferable vulgarity?

Pauline. (L.) Oh, yes!—you will forgive his manner for the sake of his heart.

Mel. (C.) And the sake of his cousin.—Ah, Madame, there is one comfort in rank,—we are so sure of our position that we are not easily affronted. Besides, M. Damas has bought the right of indulgence from his friends, by never showing it to his enemies.

Pauline. (L.) Ah! he is, indeed, as brave in action as he is rude in speech. He rose from the ranks to his present grade,—and in two years!

Mel. In two years!—two years, did you say?

Madame Deschap. (Aside, going behind.) I don't like leaving girls alone with their lovers; but, with a prince, it would be so ill-bred to be prudish.

[Exit L. U. E.]

Mel. You can be proud of your connection with one who owes his position to merit,—not birth.

Pauline. Why, yes; but still—

Mel. Still what, Pauline?

Pauline. There is something glorious in the Heritage of Command. A man who has ancestors is like a Representative of the Past.

Mel. True; but, like other representatives, nine times out of ten he is a silent member. Ah, Pauline! not to the past, but to the Future, looks true nobility, and finds it blazon in posterity.

(Leading her to seat, R. C.)

Pauline. You say this to please me, who have no ancestors; but you, Prince, must be proud of so illustrious a race!

(Sits.)

Mel. No, no! I would not, were I fifty times a prince, be a pensioner on the Dead. I honour birth and ancestry when they are regarded as the incentives to exertion, not the title-deeds to sloth; I honour the laurels that overshadow the graves of our fathers;—it is our fathers I emulate, when I desire that beneath the evergreen I myself have planted my own ashes may repose! Dearest! could'st thou but see with my eyes!

Pauline. I cannot forego pride when I look on thee, and think that thou lovest me. (Rises.) Sweet Prince, tell me again of thy palace by the Lake of Como; it is so pleasant to hear of thy splendour since thou didst swear to me that they would be desolate without Pauline; and when thou descriest them, it is with a mocking lip and a noble scorn, as if custom had made thee disdain greatness.

Mel. Nay, dearest, nay, if thou wouldst have me paint

The home to which, could Love fulfil its prayers, This hand would lead thee, listen!—* A deep vale shut out by Alpine hills from the rude world; Near a clear lake, margin'd by fruits of gold And whispering myrtles; glassing softest skies As cloudless, save with rare and roseate shadows, As I would have thy fate!

Pauline. My own dear love!

Mel. A palace lifting to eternal summer Its marble walls, from out a glossy border Of costly foliage musical with birds, Whose songs should syllable thy name! At noon

We'd sit beneath the arching vines, and wonder Why Earth could be unhappy, while the Heavens Still left us youth and love! We'd have no friends

That were not lovers; no ambition, save To excel them all in love; we'd read no books That were not tales of love—that we might smile To think how poorly cloquence of words Translates the poetry of hearts like ours! And when night came, amidst the breathless Heavens

We'd guess what star should be our home when love

Becomes immortal; while the perfumed light Stole through the mists of alabaster lamps, And every air was heavy with the sighs Of orange-groves and music from sweet lutes, And murmurs of low fountains that gush forth I' the midst of roses!—Dost thou like the picture?

* The reader will observe that Melotte evades the request of Pauline. He proceeds to describe a home, which he does not say he possesses, but to which he would lead her, "could Love fulfil its prayers." This caution is intended as a reply to a sagacious critic who censures the description, because it is not an exact and prosaic inventory of the characteristics of the Lake of Como!—When Melotte, for instance, talks of birds "that syllable the name of Pauline," (by the way a literal translation from an Italian poet,) he is not thinking of ornithology, but probably of the Arabian Nights. He is venting the extravagant, but natural, enthusiasm of the Poet and the Lover.

Pauline. Oh, as the bee upon the flower, I hang
Upon the honey of thy eloquent tongue!

Am I not blest? And if I love too wildly,
Who would not love thee like Pauline?

Mel. (*Bitterly.*) Oh, false one!
It is the prince thou lovest, not the man;
If in the stead of luxury, and pomp, and power,
I had painted poverty, toil, and care,
Thou hadst found no honey on my tongue;—

Pauline.
That is not love. (*Crosses to R.*)

Pauline. Thou wrong'st me, cruel Prince!
At first, in truth, I might not have been won,
Save through the weakness of a flattered pride;
But now,—oh! trust me,—could'st thou fall
from power

And sink—

Mel. As low as that poor gardener's son
Who dared to lift his eyes to thee?

Pauline. Even then,
Methinks thou would'st be only made more
dear

By the sweet thought that I could prove how
deep
Is woman's love! We are like the insects,
caught

By the glittering of a garish dame;
But, oh, the wings once scorched, the brightest
star

burns no more; and by the fatal light
We cling till death!

Mel. Angel! (*embracing her.*)
(*A. M.*) Oh, conscience! conscience!
It must not be; her love hath grown a torture
Worse than her hate. I will at once to Beau-
seant,

And—ha! he comes.

Enter BEAUSEANT and GLAVIS, R. 3 E.

Sweet love, one moment leave me.
I have business with these gentlemen—I—
Will forthwith join you. (*Leading her up.*)
Pauline. Do not tarry long.

[*Exit L. 3 E. They bow as she passes
them, and go to R.*]

Mel. Release me from my oath,—I will not
marry her!

Beau. Then thou art perjured.

Mel. No, I was not in my senses when I swore
to thee to marry her! I was blind to all but her
scorn!—deaf to all but my passion and my rage!
Give me back my poverty and my honour!

Beau. It is too late,—you must marry her, and
this day. I have a story already coined, and sure
to pass current. This Damas suspects thee,—he
will set the police to work;—thou wilt be detected
—Pauline will despise and execrate thee. Then
wilt be sent to the common gaol as a swindler.

Mel. Find!

Beau. And in the heat of the girl's resentment
(you know of what resentment is capable) and the
parent's shame, she will be induced to marry the
first that offers—even perhaps your humble ser-
vant.

Mel. You! No; that were worse—for thou
hast no mercy! I will marry her—I will keep my
oath. Quick, then, with the damnable invention
thou art hatching;—quick, if thou would'st not
have me strangle thee or myself. (*Crosses to R.*)

Glavis. What a tiger! Too fierce for a prince;
—he ought to have been the Grand Turk.

Beau. Enough—I will despatch; be prepared.

[*Exit Beauseant and Glavis, L. 3 E.*]

Enter DAMAS, with two swords under his coat, L.

Damas. (*C.*) Now, then, sir, the ladies are no
longer your excuse. I have brought you a couple
of dictionaries; let us see if your highness can
find out the Latin for *bilbo*.

Mel. Away, Sir!—I am in no humour for jest-
ing.

Damas. I see you understand something of the
grammar; you decline the noun substantive
“small sword” with great ease; but that won't
do you must take a lesson in *parrying*.

Mel. (*Crosses to L.*) Fool!

Damas. (*R. C.*) Sir,—as sons take after their
mother, so the man who calls me a fool insults
the lady who bore me; there's no escape for you
—fight you shall, or—

Mel. (*L. C.*) Oh, enough! enough!—take your
ground.

(*They fight; Damas is disarmed. Mel-
notte takes up the sword and returns
it to Damas respectfully.*)

A just punishment to the brave soldier who robs
the State of its best property—the sole right to his
valour and his life. (*Gives back his own sword.*)

Damas. Sir, you fence exceedingly well; you
must be a man of honour—I don't care a jot
whether you are a prince; but a man who has
courage and fierce at his fingers' ends must be a
gentleman.

Mel. (*Aside.*) Gentleman! Ay, I was a gentle-
man before I turned conspirator; for honest men
are the gentlemen of Nature! Colonel, they tell
me you rose from the ranks.

Damas. I did.

Mel. And in two years?

Damas. It is true; that's no wonder in our army
at present. Why the oldest general in the service
is scarcely thirty, and we have some of two-and-
twenty.

Mel. Two-and twenty?

Damas. Yes; in the French army, now-a-days,
promotion is not a matter of purchase. We are
all heroes, because we may be all generals. We
have no fear of the eypress, because we may all
hope for the laurel.

Mel. A general at two-and-twenty! (*Turning
away.*)—Sir, I may ask you a favour one of these
days.

Damas. Sir, I shall be proud to grant it. It is
astonishing how much I like a man after I've
fought with him.

(*Hides the swords, R. 2 E., Melnotte crosses R.*)

*Enter MADAME DESCHAPPELLES and BEAU-
SEANT, L. 3 E.*

Madame Deschap. (*L. C.*) Oh, Prince!—Prince!—
What do I hear? You must fly, you must quit us!

Mel. (*R.*) I!—

Beau. (*L. C.*) Yes, Prince; read this letter, just
received from my friend at Paris, one of the
Directory; they suspect you of designs against the
Republic; they are very suspicious of princes, and
your family take part with the Austrians. Know-
ing that I introduced your Highness at Lyons, my
friend writes to me to say that you must quit the
town immediately, or you will be arrested,—
thrown into prison,—perhaps guillotined! Fly!—

I will order horses to your carriage instantly. Fly to Marseilles; there you can take ship to Leghorn.

Madame Deschap. And what's to become of Pauline? Am I not to be mother to a princess, after all.

Enter PAULINE and M. DESCHAPPELLES.
L. 3. E.

Pauline (Throwing herself into Melnotte's arms.) You must leave us!—Leave Pauline!

Beau. (who has got round to R.) Not a moment to be wasted.

Mons. Deschap. (L. C.) I will go to the magistrates and inquire—

Beau. Then he is lost; the magistrates, hearing he is suspected, will order his arrest.

Madame Deschap. (L.) And I shall not be a Princess Dowager!

Beau. Why not? There is only one thing to be done;—send for the priest—let the marriage take place at once, and the Princee carry home a bride!

(Crosses to L. corner.)

Mel. (R.) Impossible!—(Aside.) Villain!—I know not what I say.

Madame Deschap. What, lose my child?

Beau. And gain a princess!

Madame Deschap. Oh, Monsieur Beauseant, you are so very kind, it must be so,—we ought not to be selfish, my daughter's happiness at stake. She will go away, too, in a carriage and six!

Pauline. (R. C.—receiving.) Thou art here still,—I cannot part from thee,—my heart will break.

Melnotte. (R.) But thou wilt not consent to this hasty union?—thou wilt not wed an outcast—a fugitive?

Pauline. Ah! if thou art in danger, who should share it but Pauline?

Melnotte. (Aside.) Distraction!—if the earth could swallow me!

Mons. Deschap. Gently! gently! The settlements—the contracts—my daughter's dowry!

Melnotte. The dowry!—I am not base enough for that; no, not one farthing!

Beau. (to Madame.) Noble fellow!—Really your good husband is too mercantile in these matters. Monsieur Deschappelles, you hear his Highness: we can arrange the settlements by proxy; 'tis the way with the people of quality.

Mons. Deschap. But—

Madame Deschap. (crosses to him.) Hold your tongue! Don't expose yourself!

Beau. I will bring the priest in a trice. Go in all of you and prepare; the carriage shall be at the door before the ceremony is over. (Damas sitting during the whole of the scene.)

Madame Deschap. Be sure there are six horses. Beauseant! You are very good to have forgiven us for refusing you; but you see—a prince!

Beau. And such a prince! Madame, I cannot blush at the success of so illustrious a rival. (Aside.) Now will I follow them to the village, enjoy my triumph, and to-morrow, in the hour of thy shame and grief, I think, proud girl, thou wilt prefer even these arms to those of the gardener's son.

[Exit, L. 3 E.]

Madame Deschap. (L. who have been talking together.) Come, Monsieur Deschappelles, give your arm to her Highness that is to be.

Mons. Deschap. (L. C.) I don't like doing business in such a hurry; 'tis not the way with the house of Deschappelles and Co.

Madame Deschap. There, now, you fancy you are in the counting-house, don't you?

(Pushes him to Pauline, they go up towards L. 3 E.)

Mel. Stay, stay, Pauline—one word. Have you no scruple, no fear? Speak—it is not yet too late.

Pauline. (At back.) When I loved thee, thy fate became mine. Triumph or danger—joy or sorrow—I am by thy side.

(Exit Pauline and Deschappelles, L. followed by Madame.)

Damas. Well, well, Prince, thou art a lucky man to be so loved. She is a good little girl in spite of her foibles—make her as happy as if she were not to be a princess (slapping him on the shoulder). Come, sir, I wish you joy—younge-tender—lovely;—zounds, I envy you!

Mel. (Who has stood apart in gloomy abstraction.) Do you?*

[Exit Melnotte and Damas, L. F. E.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Exterior of the Golden Lion—time, twilight. The moon rises during the scene.*

Enter LANDLORD and his Daughter from the Inn, L. C.

Land. Ha—ha—ha! Well, I never shall get over it. Our Claude is a prince with a vengeance now. His carriage breaks down at my inn—ha!—ha!

Janet. And what airs the young lady gives herself! "Is this the best room you have, young woman?" with such a toss of the head!

Land. Well, get in, Janet; get in and see to the supper. The servants must sup before they go back. [Exit L. C.]

Enter BEAUSEANT and GLAVIS, R. 2 E.

Beau. You see our Princess is lodged at last—one stage more, and she'll be at her journey's end—the beautiful palace at the foot of the Alps!—ha!—ha!

Glavis. Faith, I pity the poor Pauline—especially if she's going to sup at the Golden Lion. (Makes a wry face.) I shall never forget that cursed ragout.

Enter MELNOTTE from the Inn, L. C.

Beau. Your servant, my Prince; you reigned

*On the stage the following lines are added:—

"Do you? Wise judges are we of each other. 'Woe, wed, and bear her home!' So runs the bond."

To which I sold myself—and then—what then? Away?—I will not look beyond the hour. Like children in the dark, I dare not face The shades that gather round me in the distance.

You envy me—I thank you—you may read My joy upon my brow—I thank you, Sir! If hearts had audible language, you would hear What mine would answer when you talk of *envy!*

most worthily. I condole with you on your abjection. I am afraid that your Highness's retinue are not very faithful servants. I think they will quit you in the moment of your fall—it is the fate of greatness. But you are welcome to your fine clothes—also the diamond snuff-box, which Louis XIV. gave to your great-great-grandmother.

Glavis. And the ring, with which your grandfather, the Doge of Venice, married the Adriatic.

Mel. I have kept my oath, gentlemen, say—have I kept my oath?

Beau. Most religiously.

Mel. Then you have done with me and mine—away with you!

Beau. How, knave?

Mel. Look you, our bond is over. Proud conquerors that we are, we have won the victory over a simple girl—compromised her honour—embittered her life—blasted, in their very blossoms, all the flowers of her youth. This is your triumph,—it is my shame! (*Turns to Beausant.*) Enjoy thy triumph, but not in my sight. I was her betrayer—I am her protector! Cross but her path—one word of scorn, one look of insult—nay, but one quiver of that mocking lip, and I will teach thee that bitter word thou hast graven eternally in this heart—*Repentance!*

Beau. His Highness is most grandiloquent.

Mel. Highness me no more. Beware! Remorse has made me a new being. Away with you! There is danger in me. Away!

Glavis. (*Aside.*) He's an awkward fellow to deal with. Come away, Beausant.

Beau. I know the respect due to rank. Adieu, my Prince. Any commands at Lyons? Yet hold—I promise you two hundred louis on your wedding-day; here they are.

Mel. (*Dashing the purse to the ground.*) I gave you revenge, I did not sell it. Take up your silver, Judas; take it. (*Beausant stoops for it.*) Ay, it is fit you should learn to stoop.

Beau. You will beg my pardon for this some day. (*Aside to Glavis.*) Come to my chateau. I shall return hither to-morrow to learn how Pauline likes her new dignity.

Mel. Are you not gone yet?

Beau. Your Highness's most obedient, most faithful—

Glavis. And most humble servants. Ha! ha!

[*Exeunt Beausant and Glavis R. 2. E.*]

Mel. Thank heaven, I had no weapon, or I should have slain them. Wretch! what can I say? Where turn? On all sides mockery—the very bores within—(*Laughter from the inn.*)—'Sdeath, if even in this short absence the exposure should have chanced. I will call her. We will go hence, I have already sent one I can trust to my mother's house. There at least none can insult her agony—gloat upon her shame! There alone must she learn what a villain she has sworn to love.

As he turns to the door, enter PAULINE from the inn L. C.

Pauline. Ah! my Lord what a place! I never saw such rude people. They stare and wink so. I think the very sight of a prince, though he travels incognito, turns their honest heads. What a pity the carriage broke down in such a spot! You are not well—the drops stand on your brow—your hand is feverish.

Mel. Nay, it is but a passing spasm; the air—

Pauline. Is not the soft air of your native south—

How pale he is! indeed thou art not well!

Where are our people? I will call them.

Mel. Hold!

I—I am well.

Pauline. Thou art!—Ah! now I know it.

Thou fanciest, my kind Lord—I know thou dost—

Thou fanciest these rude walls, these rusty

gossips,

Trick'd floors, sour wine, coarse viands, vex

Pauline;

And so they might, but thou art by my side,

And I forget all else.

Enter LANDLORD, L. C. the servants peeping and laughing over his shoulder.

Land. My Lord—your Highness—

Will your most noble Excellency choose—

Mel. Begone, Sir!

[*Exit Landlord hastily door L. C.*]

Pauline. How could they have learn'd thy rank?

One's servants are so vain!—nay, let it not.

Chafe thee, sweet Prince!—a few short days, and we

Shall see thy palace by its lake of silver

(*He shrieks*)

And—nay, nay, Spendthrift, is thy wealth of smiles—

Already drained, or dost thou play the miser?

Mel. Thine eyes would call up smiles in deserts,

fair one;

Let us escape these rustics. Close at hand.

There is a cot, where I have bid prepare

Our evening lodgement—a rude, homely roof,

But honest, where our welcome will not be

Made torture by the vulgar eyes and tongues

That are as death to Love! A heavenly night!

The wooing air and the soft moon invite us.

Wilt walk? I pray thee, now,—I know the path,

Ay, every inch of it!

Pauline. What, thou! methought

Thou wert a stranger in these parts? Ah! traitor,

Some village beauty lured thee;—thou art now

Grown constant?

Mel. Trust me.

Pauline. Princes are so changeful!

Mel. (*Crosses R.*) Come, dearest, come,

Pauline. Shall I call our people to light us?

Mel. Heaven will lend its stars for torches! It is not far.

Pauline. The night breeze chills me.

Mel. Nay,

Let me thus mantle thee;—it is not cold.

Pauline. Never beneath thy smile!

Mel. (*aside.*) Oh, Heaven! forgive me!

[*Exeunt R.*]

SCENE II.—*Melnotte's Cottage, as before—Widow bustling about—A table spread for supper.*

Widow. So, I think that looks very neat. I sent me a line, so blotted that I can scarcely read it, to say he would be here almost immediately. She must have loved him well, indeed, to have forgotten his birth; for although he was introduced to her in disguise, he is too honourable not to have revealed to her the artifice which her love only could forgive. Well, I do not wonder at it; for though my son is not a prince, he ought to be one, and that's almost as good. Ah! here they are.

Enter MELNOTTE and PAULINE,
door in flut, R. C.

Widow. Oh, my boy—the pride of my heart!—welcome, welcome! I beg pardon, Ma'am, but I do love him so! *(Taking off Pauline's cloak.)*

Pauline. Good woman, I really—know, Prince, what is this?—does the old lady know you? Oh, I guess, you have done her some service. Another proof of your kind heart, is it not?

Mel. *(L. C.)* Of my kind heart, ay!

Pauline. *(C.)* So you know the Prince?

Widow. *(R.)* Know him, Madam?—Ah, I begin to fear it is you who know him not!

Pauline. Do you think she is mad? Can we stay here, my Lord? I think there's something very strange about her. *(Crosses L.)*

Mel. Madam, I—no I cannot tell her, my knees knock together: what a coward is a man who has lost his honour! Speak to her *(to his mother)*—tell her that—Oh, Heaven, that I were dead!

(Crosses R.)

Pauline. *(L.)* How confused he looks!—this strange place—this woman—what can it mean?—I half suspect—Who are you, Madam?—who are you? can't you speak? are you struck dumb?

Widow. *(C.)* Claude, you have not deceived her?—Ah, shame upon you! I thought that, before you went to the altar, she was to have known all.

Pauline. All! what?—My blood freezes in my veins!

Widow. Poor lady!—dare I tell her, Claude? *(Melnotte makes a sign of assent.)* Know you not then, Madam, that this young man is of poor though honest parents? Know you not that you are wedded to my son, Claude Melnotte?

Pauline. Your son! hold—hold! do not speak to me.—*(Approaches Melnotte, and lays her hand on his arm.)* Is this a jest?—is it? I know it is, only speak—one word—one look—one smile. I cannot believe—I who loved thee so—I cannot believe that thou art such a—No, I will not wrong thee by a harsh word—Speak!

Mel. *(Crosses centre.)* Leave us—have pity on her, on me: leave us.

Widow. Oh, Claude, that I should live to see the thee bowed by shame!—thee of whom I was so proud!

[Exit, by the staircase, L. 3. E.]

Pauline. Her son—her son!

Mel. Now, lady, hear me.

Pauline. Hear thee!

Ay, speak—her son! have friends a parent? speak!

That thou may'st silence curses—speak!

Mel. No, curse me:

Thy curse would blast me less than thy forgiveness.

Pauline *(Laughing wildly.)* "This is thy palace, where the perfumed light

"Steals through the mist of alabaster lamps,

"And every air is heavy with the sighs

"Of orange-groves, and music from sweet lutes,

"And murmurings of low fountains, that gush forth

"In the midst of roses!" Dost thou like the picture?

This is my bridal home, and thou my bridegroom!

O fool—O dupe—O wretch!—*(Crosses.)*—I see it all—

The bye-word and the jeer of every tongue in Lyons. Hast thou in thy heart one touch

Of human kindness? If thou hast, why kill me,

And save thy wife from madness. *(Crosses.)* No, it cannot—

It cannot be: this is some horrid dream; I shall wake soon.—*(Touching him.)* Art thou?

Art man? or but

The shadows seen in sleep?—It is too real.

What have I done to thee? how sinn'd against thee,

That thou should'st crush me thus? *(Gib. R.)*

Mel. Pauline, by pride—

Angels have fallen ere thy time: by pride—

That sole alloy of thy most lovely mould—

The evil spirit of a bitter love,

And a revengeful heart, had power upon thee.

From my first years my soul was fill'd with thee:

I saw thee midst the flowers the lowly boy

Tended, unmark'd by thee—a spirit of bloom,

And joy and freshness, as if Spring itself

Were made a living thing, and wore thy shape!

I saw thee, and the passionate heart of man

Enter'd the breast of the wild-dreaming boy.

And from that hour I grew—what to the last

I shall be—thine adorer! Well; this love,

Vain, frantic, guilty, if thou wilt, became

A fountain of ambition and bright hope:

I thought of tales that by the winter hearth

Old gossips tell—how maidens sprang from Kings,

Have stoop'd from their high spheres; how Love

Like Death,

Levels all ranks, and lays the shepherd's crook

Beside the sceptre. Thus I made my home

In the soft palace of a fairy Future!

My father died; and I, the peasant's son,

Was my own lord. Then did I seek to rise

Out of the prison of my mean estate;

And, with such jewels as the exploring Mind

Brings from the caves of Knowledge, buy my

ransom

From those twin gaolers of the daring heart—

Low Birth and iron Fortune. Thy bright image,

Glass'd in my soul, took all the hues of glory,

And lured me on to those inspiring toils

By which man masters men! For thee I grew

A midnight student o'er the dreams of a geologist!

For thee I sought to borrow from each Grace,

And every Muse, such attributes as lend

Ideal charms to Love. I thought of thee,

And Passion taught me poetry—of thee,

And on the painter's canvas grew the life

Of beauty!—Art became the shadow

Of the dear starlight of thy haunting eye!

Men call'd me vain—some mad. I heeded not;

But still toil'd on—hoped on—for it was sweet,

If not to win, to feel more worthy thee!

Pauline *(Aside.)* Why do I cease to hate him?

Mel. At last, in one mad hour, I dared to pour

The thoughts that burst their channels in to fondle,

And sent them to thee—such a tribute, lady,

As beauty rarely seems, even from the meanest.

The name—appended by the burning heart

That long'd to show its idol what bright things

It had created—yea, the enthusiast's name!

That should have been thy triumph, was thy scorn!

That very hour—when passion, turned to wrath,

Resembled Hatred most—when thy disdain

Made my whole soul a chaos—in that hour

The tempters found me a revengeful tool

For their revenge! Thou hadst trampled on my

worm—

It turn'd and stung thee!

(Sinks in despair.)

Pauline. Love, Sir, hath no sting.

What was the slight of a poor powerless girl
To the deep wrong of this most vile revenge?
Oh, how I loved this man! a serf! a slave!

Mel. (*Starts up.*) Hold, lady!—No, not slave!
Despair is free!

I will not tell thee of the throes—the struggles—
The anguish—the remorse: No! let it pass!
And let me come to such most poor atonement
Yet in my power. *Pauline!*—

(*Approaching her with great emotion,
and about to take her hand.*)

Pauline. No, touch me not!

I know my fate. You are, by law, my tyrant:

And I—oh Heaven!—a peasant's wife! I'll
work—

Till—drudge—do what thou wilt—but touch me
not;

Let my wrongs make me sacred!

Mel. Do not fear me.

Thou dost not know me, Madam. At the
altar

My vengeance ceased—my guilty oath expir'd!

Henceforth, no image of some marble saint,

Nich'd in cathedral aisles, is hallow'd more
From the rude hand of sacrilegious wrong.

I am thy husband—nay, thou need'st not shud-
der;—

Here, at thy feet, I lay a husband's rights.

A marriage thus unholy—unfulfill'd—

A bond of fraud—is, by the laws of France,
Made void and null. To-night sleep—sleep in
peace.

To-morrow, pure and virgin as, this morn

I bore thee, bathed in blushes, from the shrine,

Thy father's arms shall take thee to thy home.

The law shall do thee justice, and restore

Thy right to bless another with thy love.

And when thou art happy, and hast half forgot
Him who so loved—so wrong'd thee, think at
least

Heaven left some remnant of the angel still

In that poor peasant's nature! (*Cells.*)

Ho! my mother!

Enter WIDOW down stairs.

Con'net this lady—(she is not my wife;

she is our guest,—our honour'd guest, my
mother!)

To the poor chamber, where the sleep of virtue,

Never, beneath my father's honest roof,

Even villains dared to mar!

(*Gently takes her hand and passes her
over to the Widow.*)

Now, lady, now,

I think thou wilt believe me.—Go, my mother!

Widow. She is not thy wife!

Mel. Hush! hush! for mercy's sake!

Speak not, but go.

(*Widow ascends the stairs: Pauline
follows weeping—turns to look back.*)

Mel. (*Sinking down.*) All angels bless and guard
her!

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The cottage as before—MELNOTTE
seated before a table—writing implements, &c.—
(Door knocking.) The Prince's coat on a chair.*
MELNOTTE seals letter, and listens at the foot of
stairs. Puts out the candle after sealing the note.

Mel. She sleeps at last!—thank Heaven, for
awhile she forgets even that I live! Her sobe,
which has gone to my heart the whole, long,
desolate night, have ceased! all calm—all still!
I will go now; I will send this letter to Pauline's
father—when he arrives, I will place in his hands
my own consent to the divorce, and then, O
France! my country! accept among thy pro-
tectors, thy defenders—the peasant's son! Our
country is less proud than custom, and does not
refuse the blood, the heart, the right hand of the
poor man!

Enter WIDOW down the stairs.

Widow. My son, thou hast acted ill; but sin
brings its own punishment. In the hour of thy
remorse, it is not for a mother to reproach thee!

Mel. (*c.*) What is past is past. There is a future
left to all men, who have the virtue to repent and
the energy to atone. Thou shalt be proud of thy
son yet. Meanwhile, remember this poor lady has
been grievously injured. For the sake of thy
son's conscience, respect, honour, bear with her.
If she weep, console—if she chide, be silent! 'Tis
but a little while more—I shall send an express
fast as horse can speed to her father. Farewell!—
I shall return shortly.

Widow. (*L. c.*) It is the only course left to
thee—thou wert led astray, but thou art not har-
dened. Thy heart is right still, as ever it was
when, in thy most ambitious hopes, thou wert
never ashamed of thy poor mother!

Mel. Ashamed of thee! (*Embraces her.*) No,
if I yet endure, yet live, yet hope—it is only be-
cause I would not die till I have redeemed the
noble heritage I have lost—the heritage I took
misted from thee and my dead father—a proud
conscience and an honest name. I shall win them
back yet—Heaven bless you!

[*Exit, D. F. R.*]

Widow (*She opens the shutters.*) My dear Claude!
—How my heart bleeds for him!

(*Pauline looks down from above, L.,
and after a pause descends.*)

Pauline. Not here!—he spares me that pain at
least; so far he is considerate—yet the place
seems still more desolate without him. Oh, that
I could hate him—the gardener's son!—and yet
how nobly he—no—no—no I will not be so mean
a thing as to forgive him!

Widow. Good morning, Madam; I would have
waited on you if I had known you were stirring.

Pauline. It is no matter, Madam—your son's
wife ought to wait on herself.

Widow. My son's wife—let not that thought vex
you, Madam—he tells me that you will have your
divorce. And I hope I shall live to see him smile
again. There are maidens in this village, young
and fair, Madam, who may yet console him.

Pauline. I dare say—they are very welcome—
and when the divorce is got, he will marry again.
I am sure I hope so. (*Weeps.*)

Widow. He could have married the richest girl

in the province, if he had pleased it; but his head was turned, poor child!—he could think of nothing but you. (Weeps.)

Pauline. Don't weep, mother.

Widow. Ah, he has behaved very ill, I know—but love is so headstrong in the young. Don't weep, Madam.

Pauline. So, as you were saying—go on.

Widow. Oh, I cannot excuse him, Ma'am—he was not in his right senses.

Pauline. But he always—always (sobbing) loved—loved me then?

Widow. He thought of nothing else. See here—he learnt to paint that he might take your likeness (uncovers the picture). But that's all over now—I trust you have cured him of his folly;—but, dear heart, you have had no breakfast!

Pauline. I can't take anything—don't trouble yourself.

Widow. Nay, Madam, be persuaded; a little coffee will refresh you. Our milk and eggs are excellent. I will get out Claude's coffee-cup—it is of real Sèvres; he saved up all his money to buy it three years ago, because the name of Pauline was inscribed on it.

Pauline. Three years ago! Poor Claude!—Thank you; I think I will have some coffee. Oh! if he were but a poor gentleman, even a merchant; but a gardener's son—and what a home!—Oh no, it is too dreadful!

(They seat themselves at the table, Beausant opens the lattice and looks in.)

Beau. So—so—the coast is clear! I saw Claude in the lane—I shall have an excellent opportunity.

(Shuts the lattice and knocks at the door.)

Pauline (Starting). Can it be my father?—He has not sent for him yet? No, he cannot be in such a hurry to get rid of me.

Widow. It is not time for your father to arrive yet; it must be some neighbour. (Opens door.)

Pauline. Don't admit anyone.

BEAUSEANT pushes the widow aside and enters, &c.

Ha! Heavens! that hateful Beausant! This is indeed bitter!

Beau. (R. c.) Good morning, Madam! Oh, Widow, your son begs you will have the goodness to go to him in the village—he wants to speak to you on particular business; you will find him at the inn, or the grocer's shop, or the baker's, or at some other friends of your family—make haste.

Pauline. Don't leave me, mother!—don't leave me.

Beau. (With great respect.) Be not alarmed, Madam. Believe me your friend—your servant.

Pauline. Sir, I have no fear of you, even in this house! Go, madam, if your son wishes it; I will not contradict his commands whilst, at least, he has still the right to be obeyed.

Widow. (C. of stage.) I don't understand this; however, I shan't be long gone. [Exit, D. R. C.]

Pauline. (L. c.) Sir, I divine the object of your visit—you wish to exult in the humiliation of one who humbled you. Be it so; I am prepared to endure all—even your presence!

Beau. (R. c.) You mistake me, Madam—Pauline, you mistake me! I come to lay my fortune at

your feet. You must already be disenchanted with this impostor; these walls are not worthy to be hallowed by your beauty! Shall that form be clasped in the arms of a base-born peasant? Beloved, beautiful Pauline! fly with me—my carriage waits without—I will bear you to a home—more meet for your reception. Wealth, luxury, station—all shall yet be yours. I forget your past disdain—I remember only your beauty and my unconquerable love!

Pauline. (L.) Sir! leave this house—it is humble; but a husband's roof, however lowly, is in the eyes of God and man, the temple of a wife's honour! Know that I would rather starve—yes—with him who has betrayed me, than accept your lawful hand, even were you the Prince whose name he bore!—Go.

Beau. What! is not your pride humbled yet?

Pauline. Sir, what was pride in prosperity in affliction becomes virtue.

Beau. Look round: these rugged floors—these homely walls—this wretched struggle of poverty for comfort—think of this! and contrast with such a picture the refinement, the luxury, the pomp, that the wealthiest gentleman of Lyons offers to the loveliest lady. Ah, hear me!

Pauline. Oh! my father!—why did I leave you?—why am I thus friendless? Sir, you see before you a betrayed, injured, miserable woman!—respect her anguish!

(Melnotte opens the door silently, and pauses at the threshold.)

Beau. No! let me rather thus console it; let me snatch from those lips one breath of that fragrance which never should be wasted on the low churl thy husband.

Pauline. Help! Claude!—Claude!—Have I no protector?

Beau. Be silent! (Showing a pistol.) See, I do not come unprepared even for violence. I will brave all things—thy husband and all his race—for thy sake. Thus, then, I elasp thee!

Mel. (Dashing him to the other end of the stage.)

Pauline—look up, Pauline! thou art safe.

Beau. (Levelling his pistol.) Dare you thus insult a man of my birth, ruffian?

Pauline. (Crosses C., and interposing.) Oh, spare him—spare my husband!—Beausant—Claude—no—no— (Faints.)

Mel. (Supporting her.) Miserable trickster! shame on you! brave devices to terrify a woman! Coward!—you tremble—you have outraged the laws—you know that your weapon is harmless—you have the courage of the mountebank, not the bravo!—Pauline, there is no danger.

Beau. I wish thou wert a gentleman—as it is thou art beneath me.—Good day, and a happy honeymoon. (Aside.) I will not die till I am avenged.

[Exit, D. R. C.]

Mel. (Placing her on seat.) I hold her in these arms—the last embrace!

Never, ah, never more, shall this dear head Be pillow'd on the heart that should have shelter'd

And has betray'd! Soft—soft! one kiss—poor wretch;

No scorn on that pale lip forbids me now!

One kiss—so ends all record of my crime!

It is the seal upon the tomb of hope, By which, like some lost, sorrowing angel, sits

sal memory evermore;—she breathes—she moves—

She wakes to scorn, to hate, but not to shudder
Beneath the touch of my abhorred love.

“There—we are strangers now!”

Pauline, (Rises.) All gone—all calm—
Is every thing a dream? thou art safe, unhurt—
I do not love thee; but—’tist I am woman,
And—and—no blood is spilt?

Mel. No, lady, no;

My guilt hath not deserved so rich a blessing
As even danger in thy cause.

Enter WIDOW, v. in flat.

Widow. My son, I have been everywhere in
search of you; why did you send for me?

Mel. I did not send for you.

Widow. No! but I must tell you your express
was returned.

Mel. So soon! impossible!

Widow. Yes, he met the lady’s father and
mother on the road; they were going into the
country on a visit. Your messenger says that
Monsieur Deschappelles turned almost white with
anger when he read your letter. They will be
here almost immediately. Oh, Claude, Claude!
what will they do to you? How I tremble!—Ah,
Madam! do not let them injure him—if you knew
how he doted on you!

(Getting up, taking chair from c.)

Pauline. (L. c.) Injure him; no Ma’am, be not
afraid;—my father! how shall I meet him? how
go back to Lyons? the scott of the whole city!—
Cruel, cruel, Claude—*(in great agitation)*—Sir, you
have acted most treacherously.

Mel. I know it, Madam.

Pauline. (Aside.) If he would but ask me to for-
give him!—I never can forgive you, Sir!

Mel. I never dare to hope it.

Pauline. But you are my husband now, and I
have sworn to—to love you, Sir.

Mel. That was under a false belief, Madam;
Heaven and the laws will release you from your
vow.

Pauline. He will drive me mad! if he were— but
less proud—if he would but ask me to remain—
hark, hark—I hear the wheels of the carriage—
Sir—Claude, they are coming; have you no word
to say ere it is too late? Quick—speak.

Mel. I can only congratulate you on your re-
lease. Behold your parents!

*Enter MONSIEUR and MADAME DESCHAP-
PELLES and COLONEL DAMAS, door R. c.
from L.*

Mons. Deschap. (L. c.) My child!—my child!

Madame Deschap. (L.) Oh, my poor Pauline!—
what a villainous hovel this is! Old woman, get
me a chair—I shall faint—I certainly shall.
What will the world say?—Child, you have been a
fool. A mother’s heart is easily broken.

Damas. (c.) Ha, ha!—most noble Prince—I am
sorry to see a man of your quality in such a con-
dition; I am afraid your Highness will go to the
House of Correction.

Mel. (R.) Taunt on, Sir; I spare you when you
were married—I am unruined now. A man who
has no excuse for crime is indeed defenceless!

Damas. There’s something fine in the rascal,
after all!

(Goes v.)

Mons. Deschap. (L. c.) Where is the impostor?
—Are you thus shameless, traitor? Can you
brave the presence of that girl’s father?
Mel. Strike me, if it please you—you are her
father.

Pauline. Sir—sir, for my sake; whatever his
guilt, he has acted nobly in atonement.

Madame Deschap. Nobly! Are you mad, girl? I
have no patience with you—to disgrace all your
family thus! Nobly! Oh, you abominable, hard-
ened, pitiful, mean, ugly villain!

Damas. (L.) Ugly! Why he was beautiful
yesterday!

Pauline. Madam, this is his roof, and he is my
husband. Respect your daughter, or let blame
fall alone on her.

Madame Deschap. (L. c.) You—you—oh, I’m
choking!

Mons. Deschap. (c.) Sir, it were idle to waste
reproach upon a conscience like yours—you re-
nounce all pretensions to the person of this lady?

Mel. (R. c.) I do. *(Gives a paper.)* Here is my
consent to a divorce—my full confession of the
fraud, which annuls the marriage. Your daughter
has been foully wronged—I grant it, sir; but her
own lips will tell you that, from the hour in which
she crossed this threshold, I returned to my own
station, and respected hers. Pure and inviolate,
as when yesternight you laid your hand upon her
head and blessed her, I yield her back to you.
For myself, I deliver you for ever from my pre-
sence. An outcast and a criminal, I seek some
distant land, where I may mourn my sin, and
pray for your daughter’s peace. Farewell—fare-
well to you all, for ever!

Widow. (R.) Claude, Claude, you will not leave
your poor old mother? She does not disown you
in your sorrow—no, not even in your guilt. No
divorce can separate a mother from her son.

Pauline. This poor widow teaches me my duty.
No, mother—no, for you are now my mother
also!—nor should any law, human or divine,
separate the wife from her husband’s sorrows.
Claude—Claude—all is forgotten—forgiven—I am
thine for ever!

(Rushes to him.)

Madame Deschap. (L.) What do I hear? Come
away, or never see my face again.

Mons. Deschap. (L. c.) Pauline, we never be-
trayed you!—do you forsake us for him?

Pauline. (Going back to her father.) Oh, no—
but you will forgive him, too; we will live to-
gether—he shall be your son.

Mons. Deschap. Never! (Cling to him and forsake
your parents! His home shall be yours—his for-
tune yours—his fate yours. The wealth I have
acquired by honest industry shall never enrich the
dishonest man.

Pauline. And you would have a wife enjoy
luxury while a husband toils! Claude, take me;
thou canst not give me wealth, titles, station—
but thou canst give me a true heart. I will work
for thee, tend thee, bear with thee, and never,
never shall these lips reproach thee for the past.

(Falls on his neck.)

Damas. I’ll be hanged if I am not going to
blubber!

Mel. This is the heaviest blow of all! What a
heart I have wronged! Do not fear me, sir; I
am not at all hardened—I will not rob her of a
holier love than mine. Pauline—angel of love and
mercy!—your memory shall lead me back to vir-
tue! The husband of a being so beautiful in her

noble and sublime tenderness may be poor—may be low-born;—(there is no guilt in the decrees of Providence!)—but he should be one who can look thee in the face without a blush,—to whom thy love does not bring remorse,—who can fold thee to his heart, and say, “Here there is no deceit!”—I am not that man!

Dumas. (Going down R., aside to Melnotte.) Thou art a noble fellow, notwithstanding; and wouldst make an excellent soldier. Serve in my regiment. I have had a letter from the Directory—our young general takes the command of the army in Italy,—I am to join him at Marseilles,—I will depart this day, if thou wilt go with me.

Mel. It is the favour I would have asked thee, if I dared. Place me wherever a foe is most dreaded,—wherever France most needs a life!

Dumas. There shall not be a forlorn hope without thee!

(Goes up to door and makes a sign; the Marseillaise Hymn is heard, piano becoming forte by the end of Act.)

Mel. (Kneeling to Widow, who comes down R.) There is my hand!—Mother, your blessing. I shall see you again—a better man than a prince—a man who has bought the right to high thoughts by brave deeds. And thou—thou! so wildly worshipped, so guiltily betrayed—all is not yet lost!—for thy memory, at least, must be mine till death! If I live, the name of him thou hast once loved shall not rest dishonoured; if I fall, amidst the carnage and the roar of battle, my soul will fly back to thee, and Love shall share with Death my last sigh! More—more would I speak to thee—to pray—to bless! But no! When I am less unworthy I will utter it to Heaven! I cannot trust myself to—*(turning to Deschappelles.)* Your pardon, sir—they are my last words—Farewell!

[Exit.]

“Dumas.” “I will go after him.—France will thank me for this.

[Exit.]

Pauline (starting from her father's arms) Claude!
—Claude!—my husband!

(Faints in her father's arms.)

“Mons. Deschap.” You have a father still!”

DAMAS.

DESCHAP.

CLAUDE.

PAULINE.

WIDOW.

MADAME.

R.

L.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT. V.

SCENE I.—The Streets of Lyons.

Two years and a half from the date of Act IV.

Enter First, Second, and Third Officers. L.

First Officer.—Well, here we are at Lyons, with gallant old Dumas: it is his native place.

Second Officer. Yes; he has gained a step in the army since he was here last. The Lyonese ought to be very proud of stout General Dumas.

Third Officer. Promotion is quick in the French

army. This mysterious Morier,—the hero of Lodi, and the favourite of the Commander-in-Chief,—has risen to a colonel's rank in two years' and a half.

Enter DAMAS as a General, L.

Dumas. (c.) Good morrow, gentlemen; I hope you will amuse yourselves during our short stay at Lyons. It is a fine city: improved since I left it. Ah! it is a pleasure to grow old,—when the years that bring decay to ourselves do but ripen the prosperity of our country. You have not met with Morier?

First Officer. No: we were just speaking of him.

Second Officer. Pray, General, can you tell us who this Morier really is?

Dumas. Is!—why a colonel in the French army.

Third Officer. True. But what was he at first?

Dumas. At first? why a baby in long clothes, I suppose.

First Officer. Ha!—ha!—Ever factions, General.

Second Officer (to Third). The General is sore upon this point; you will only chafe him. Any commands, General? *(Crosses to R.)*

Dumas. None.—Good day to you!

[Exit Second and Third Officers, R.]

Dumas (L. c.) Our comrades are very inquisitive. Poor Morier is the subject of a vast deal of curiosity.

First Officer (R.) Say, interest, rather, General. His constant melancholy,—the loneliness of his habits,—his daring valour, his brilliant rise in the profession,—your friendship, and the favours of the Commander-in-Chief,—all tend to make him as much the matter of gossip as of admiration. But where is he, General? I have missed him all the morning.

Dumas. Why, Captain, I'll let you into a secret. My young friend has come with me to Lyons in hopes of finding a miracle.

First Officer. A miracle!

Dumas. Yes, a miracle! in other words,—a constant woman.

First Officer. Oh!—an affair of love!

Dumas. Exactly so. No sooner did he enter Lyons than he waved his hand to me, threw himself from his horse, and is now, I warrant, asking everyone who can know anything about the matter, whether a certain lady is still true to a certain gentleman!

First Officer. Success to him!—and of that success there can be no doubt. The gallant Colonel Morier, the hero of Lodi, might make his choice out of the proudest families in France.

Dumas. Oh, if pride be a recommendation, the lady and her mother are most handsomely endowed. By the way, Captain, if you should chauce to meet with Morier, tell him he will find me at the hotel.

First Officer. I will, General.

[Exit, R.]

Dumas. Now will I go to the Deschappelles, and make a report to my young Colonel. Ha! by Mars, Bacchus, Apollo, Virorum,—here comes Monsieur Beauseant!

Enter BEAUSEANT (R.).

Good-morrow, Monsieur Beauseant! How fares it with you?

Beau. (Aside.) Damas! that is unfortunate:—“If the Italian campaign should have filled his

pockets, he may seek to baffle me in the moment of my victory." (Aloud.) Your servant, General,—for such, I think, is your new distinction! Just arrived in Lyons?

Damas. Not an hour ago. Well, how go on the Deschappelles? Have they forgiven you in that affair of young Melnotte? You had some hand in that notable device,—eh?

Beau. Why, less than you think for! The fellow imposed upon me. I have set it all right now. What has become of him? He could not have joined the army, after all. There is no such name in the books.

Damas. I know nothing about Melnotte. As you say, I never heard the name in the Grand Army.

Beau. Hem!—You are not married, General?

Damas. Do I look like a married man, Sir?—No, thank Heaven! My profession is to make widows, not wives.

Beau. You must have gained much booty in Italy! Pauline will be your heiress—eh?

Damas. Booty! Not I! Heiress to what? Two trunks and a portmanteau,—four horses,—three swords,—two snits of regimentals, and six pair of white leather inexpressibles! A pretty fortune for a young lady!

Beau. (Aside.) Then all is safe! (Aloud.) Ha! ha! Is that really all your capital, General Damas? Why I thought Italy had been a second Mexico to you soldiers.

Damas. All a toss-up, sir. I was not one of the lucky ones! My friend, Morier, indeed saved something handsome. But our Commander-in-Chief took care of him, and Morier is a thrifty, economical dog,—not like the rest of us soldiers, who spend our money as carelessly as if it were our blood.

Beau. Well, it is no matter! I do not want fortune with Pauline. And you must know, General Damas, that your fair cousin has at length consented to reward my long and ardent attachment.

Damas. You!—the devil. Why she is already married! There is no divorce!

Beau. True; but this very day she is formally to authorize the necessary proceedings,—this very day she is to sign the contract that is to make her mine within one week from the day on which her present illegal marriage is annulled.

Damas. You tell me wonders!—Wonders! No; I believe anything of women! (Crosses to R.)

Beau. I must wish you good morning.

(Crosses to L.)

As he is going, enter DESCHAPPELLES. L.

Mons. Deschap. Oh, Beausant! well met. Let us come to the notary at once.

Damas (to Deschappelles). Why, cousin!

Mons. Deschap. Damas, welcome to Lyons. Pray call on us; my wife will be delighted to see you.

Damas. Your wife be—blessed for her condescension! But (taking him aside) what do I hear? Is it possible that your daughter has consented to a divorce?—that she will marry Monsieur Beausant?

Mons. Deschap. Certainly! What have you to say against it! A gentleman of birth, fortune, character. We are not so proud as we were; even my wife has had enough of nobility and princes!

Damas. But Pauline loved that young man so tenderly.

Mons. Deschap. (taking snuff). That was two years and a half ago!

Damas. Very true. Poor Melnotte!

Mons. Deschap. But do not talk of that impostor; I hope he is dead or has left the country. Nay, even were he in Lyons at this moment, he ought to rejoice that, in an honourable and suitable alliance, my daughter may forget her sufferings and his crime.

Damas. Nay, if it be all settled, I have no more to say. Monsieur Beausant informs me that the contract is to be signed this very day.

Mons. Deschap. It is; at one o'clock precisely. Will you be one of the witnesses?

Damas. I;—No; that is to say—yes, certainly!—at one o'clock I will wait on you.

Mons. Deschap. Till then, adieu—come, Beausant.

[Exeunt Beausant and Deschappelles. L.]

Damas. The man who sets his heart upon a woman

Is a cham-lion, and doth feed on air;
From air he takes his colours, —holds his life,—
Changes with every wind,—grows lean or fat,
Rosy with hope, or green with jealousy,
On pallid with despair—just as the gale
Varies from north to south—from heat to cold!
Oh, woman! woman! thou should'st have few
sins

Of thine own to answer for! Thou art the
author
Of such a book of follies in a man,
That it would need the tears of all the angels
To blot the record out!

Enter MELNOTTE, pale and agitated. R. 2. E.

I need not tell thee! Thou hast heard—

Mel. The worst!

I have!

Damas. Be cheer'd; others are fair as she is!

Mel. Others!—The world is crumbled at my feet!

She was my world; fill'd up the whole of being—
Smiled in the sunshine—walk'd the glorious
earth—

Sate in my heart—was the sweet life of life.
The Past was hers: I dreamt not of a Future
That did not wear her shape! Mem'ry and Hope
Alike are gone. Pauline is faithless! Hence—
forth

The universal space is desolate!

Damas. Hope yet.

Mel. Hope, yes!—one hope is left me still—
A soldier's grave! "Glory has died with Love;
"I look into my heart, and, where I saw
"Pauline, see Death!"

(After a pause.)—But am I not deceived?

I went but by the rumour of the town;
Rumour is false,—I was too hasty! Damas,
Whom hast thou seen?

Damas. Thy rival and her father.

Arm thyself for the truth—He heeds not—

Mel. She

Will never know how deeply she was loved!

"The charitable night, that went to bring
"Comfort to-day, in bright and eloquent dreams,
"Is henceforth leagued with misery! Sleep,
farewell,

"Or else become eternal! Oh, the waking

"From false oblivion, and to see the sun,

"And know she is another's!"—

Damas. Be a man!

Mel. I am a man;—it is the sting of woe
Like mine that tells us we are men!

Damas. The false one
Did not deserve thee.

Mel. Hush!—No word against her!
Why should she keep, through years and silent
absence,

The holy tablets of her virgin faith
True to a traitor's name; Oh, blame her not!
It were a sharper grief to think her worthless
Than to be what I am! To-day, —to-day!
They said "To-day!" This day, so wildly wel-
comed—

This day, my soul had singled out of time
And mark'd for bliss! This day! oh, could I see
her,

See her once more unknown; but hear her voice.
"So that one echo of its music might

"Make ruin less appalling in its silence.

Damas. Easily done! Come with me to her
house;

Your dress—your cloak—moustache—the bronzed
hues

Of time and toil—the name you bear—belief
In your absence,—all will ward away suspicion.
Keep in the shade. Ay, I would have you come.
There may be hope! Pauline is yet so young,
They may have forced her to these second brides
"Out of mistaken love."

Mel. "No," bid me hope not!

Bid me not hope! I could not bear again

To fall from such a heaven! One gleam of smi-
shine,

And the ice breaks and I am lost! Oh, Damas,
There's no such thing as courage in a man;
The veriest slave that ever crawled from danger
Might spurn me now. When first I lost her,
Damas,

I bore it, did I not? I still had hope,
And now I—!— (*Bursts into an agony of grief.*)

Damas. What, comrade! all the women
That ever smil'd destruction on brave hearts
Were not worth tears like these!

Mel. 'Tis past—forget it.

"I am prepared; life has no farther ills!

"The cloud has broken in that stormy rain,

"And on the waste I stand, alone with Heaven.

Damas. "His very face is changed; a breaking
heart

"Does its work soon!"—Come, Meluotte, rouse
thyself:

One effort more. Again thou'lt see her.

Mel. See her!

There is a passion in that simple sentence
That shivers all the pride and power of reason
Into a chaos!

Damas. Time wanes;—come, ere yet
It be too late.

Mel. Terrible words—"Too late!"

Lead on. One last look more, and then—

Damas. Forget her!

Mel. Forget her, yes!—For death remembers
not.

[*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE II.—A room in the house of Monsieur
Deschappelles; Pauline seated in great dejection,
E.

Pauline. It is so, then. I must be false to
Love,

Or sacrifice a father! Oh, my Claude,

My lover, and my husband! have I liv'd!
To pray that thou may'st find some fairer boon
Than the deep faith of this devoted heart,—
Nourish'd till now—now broken?

*Enter MONSIEUR DESCHAPPELLES, c.
from L.*

Mons. Deschap. My dear child,
How shall I thank—how bless thee? Thou hast
saved—

I will not say my fortune—I could bear
Reverse, and shrink not—but that prouder wealth
Which merchants value most—my name, my
credit—

The hard-won honours of a toilsome life:—

These thou hast saved, my child!

Pauline. Is there no hope?

No hope but this?

Mons. Deschap. None. If without the sum
Which Beauneant offers for thy hand, this day
Sinks to the west—to-morrow brings our ruin!
And hundreds, mingled in that ruin, curse
The bankrupt merchant! and the insolent herd
We feasted and made merry ere in scorn,
"How pride has fallen!—Lo, the bankrupt mer-
chant!"—

My daughter, thou hast saved us!

Pauline. And am lost!

Mons. Deschap. Come, let me hope that Beau-
seant's love—

Pauline. His love!

Talk not of love. Love has no thought of self!
Love buys not with the ruthless usurer's gold
The loathsome prostitution of a hand
Without a heart? Love sacrifices all things
To bless the thing it loves! He knows not love.
Father, his love is hate—his hope revenge!
My tears, my anguish, my remorse for false-
hood—

These are the joys that he wrings from our
despair!

Mons. Deschap. If thou deem'st thus, reject
him! Shame and ruin

Were better than thy misery;—think no more
on't.

My sand is well-nigh run—what boots it when
The glass is broken? We'll annul the contract.
And if to-morrow in the prisoner's cell
These aged limbs are laid, why still, my child,
I'll think thou art spared; and wait the Liberal
Hour

That lays the beggar by the side of kings!

Pauline. No no—forgive me! You, my
honour'd father,—

You, who so loved, so cherished me, whose lips
Never knew one harsh word! I'm not ungrate-
ful!

I am but human!—hush! Now, call the bride-
groom—

You see I am prepared—no tears—all calm;
But, father, talk no more of love!

Mons. Deschap. My child,
'Tis but one struggle; he is young, rich, noble;
Thy state will rank first 'mid the dames of Lyons;
And when this heart can shelter thee no more,
Thy youth will not be guardianless.

Pauline. I have set

My foot upon the ploughshare—I will pass
The fiery ordeal. (*Aside.*) Merciful Heaven,
support me!

And on the absent wanderer shed the light
Of happier stars—lost evermore to me!

Enter MADAME DESCHAPPELLES, BEAUSANT, GLAVIS and NOTARY.

Madame Deschap. Why, Pauline, you are quite in a *schalle*—you ought to be more alive to the importance of this joyful occasion. We had once looked higher, it is true; but you see, after all, Monsieur Beausant's father was a Marquis, and that's a great comfort! "Pedigree and jointure!"—you have them both in Monsieur Beausant. "A young lady decorously brought up should only have two considerations in her choice of a husband:—first, is his birth honourable,—secondly, will his death be advantageous? All other trifling details should be left to parental anxiety!"

Beau. "(Approaching and waving aside Madame)." Ah, Pauline! let me hope that you are reconciled to an event which confers such rapture upon me.

Pauline. I am reconciled to my doom.

Beau. Doom is a harsh word, sweet lady.

Pauline. (Aside.) This man must have some mercy—his heart cannot be marble. (Aloud.) Oh, Sir, be just—be generous!—seize a noble triumph—a great revenge!—Save the father, and spare the child!

Beau. (Aside.) Joy—joy alike to my hatred and my passion! The haughty Pauline is at last my suppliant. (Aloud.) You ask from me what I have not the sublime virtue to grant: a virtue reserved only for the gardener's son! I cannot forego my hopes in the moment of their fulfilment!—I adhere to the contract—your father's ruin or your hand!

Pauline. Then all is over.—Sir I have decided. (The clock strikes one.)

Enter DAMAS and MELNOTTE c. from L.

Damas. Your servant, cousin Deschappelles.—Let me introduce Colonel Morier.

Madame Deschap. (Counting very low.) What, the celebrated hero? This is, indeed, an honour!

(After the introduction, all go to table except Pauline, n. c. Damas, c. Claude L. up stage.)

Damas (to Pauline, c.) My little cousin, I congratulate you; What, no smile—no blush? You are going to be divorced from poor Melnotte, and marry this rich gentleman. You ought to be excessive happy!

Pauline. (n.) Happy! (Sighs.)

Damas. Why, how pale you are, child! Poor Pauline! (Aside.) Hist—confide in me! Do they force you to this?

Pauline. No!

Damas. You act with your own free consent?

Pauline. My own consent *after a struggle*—yes.

Damas. Then you are the most—I will not say what you are!

Pauline. You think ill of me—be it so—yet if you knew all—

Damas. There is some mystery—speak out

Pauline.

Pauline. (Suddenly.) Oh! perhaps you can save me! you are our relation—our friend. My father is on the verge of bankruptcy—this day he requires a large sum to meet demands that cannot be denied; that sum Beausant will advance—this I find the condition of the bargain. Save me if you have the means—save me; You will be repaid above!

Damas. (Aside.) I recant—Women are not so bad after all! (Aloud.) Humph, child; I cannot help you—I am too poor!

Pauline. The last plank to which I cling is shivered!

Damas. Hold—you see my friend Morier; Melnotte is his most intimate friend—fought in the same fields—slept in the same tent. Have you any message to send to Melnotte?—any word to soften this blow?

(Whispers to Claude, who advances to L. Damas then goes to the table.)

Pauline. He knows Melnotte—he will see him—he will bear to him my last farewell—(Approaches Melnotte, who averts his head.)—He has a stern air—he turns away from me—he despises me!—Sir, one word, I beseech you.

Mel. Her voice again! How the old time comes o'er me!

Damas. (to Madame) Don't interrupt them. He is going to tell her what a rascal young Melnotte is; he knew him well, I promise you.

Madame Deschap. So considerate in you, cousin Damas!

(Damas approaches Deschappelles, converses apart with her in dumb show. Deschappelles shows him a paper, which he inspects and takes.)

Pauline. Thrice have I sought to speak; my courage fails me.—

Sir, is it true that you have known—nay, are The friend of—Melnotte?

Mel. Lady, yes!—"Myself

"And misery know the man!"

Pauline. And you will see him, And you will bear to him—ay—word for word, All that this heart, which breaks in parting from him,

Would send, are still for ever?

Mel. "He hath told me

"You have the right to choose from out the world

"A worthier bridegroom:—he forgoes all claim, "Even to murmur at his doom."—Speak on!

Pauline. Tell him, for years I never nursed a thought

That was not his;—that on his wandering way, Daily and nightly, pour'd a mourner's prayers, Tell him ev'n now that I would rather share

His lowliest lot—walk by his side, an outcast,— Work for him, beg with him,—live upon the light Of one kind smile from him,—than wear the crown

The Bourbon lost!

Mel. (Aside.) "Am I already mad?

"And does delirium utter such sweet words

"Into a dreamer's ear?" (Aloud.) "You love him thus,

And yet desert him?

Pauline. Say, that, if his eye Could read this heart,—its struggles, its temptations,—

His love itself would pardon that desertion!

Look on that poor old man, he is my father!

He stands upon the verge of an abyss!

He calls his child to save him! Shall I shrink From him who gave me birth?—withhold my hand,

And see a parent perish? Tell him this, And say—that we shall meet again in heaven!

Mel. *Lady—I—I—what is this riddle?—what
The nature of this sacrifice?

Pauline. (Pointing to *Damas*.) "Go, ask him!"

Beau. (From the table.) The papers are prepared
—we only need

Your hand and seal.

Mel. Stay, lady—(Aside to her.) one word more.
Were but your duty with your faith united,
Would you still share the low-born peasant's lot?

Pauline. Would I? Ah, better death with him
I love

Than all the pomp—which is but as the flowers
That crown the victim!—(Turning away.) I am
ready.

Damas. (To *Melnotte*, throwing him a paper.)
There—

This is the schedule—this the total.

Beau. (to *Deschappelles*, showing notes.) These
Are years the instant she has sign'd; you are
Still the great House of Lyons!

Notary. Now, Mademoiselle, your signature.

(The Notary is about to hand the con-
tract to *Pauline*, when *Melnotte*
seizes it and tears it.)

Beau. (going to L.) Are you mad?

Mons. Deschap. (R. of table.) How, Sir! What
means this insult?

Mel. Peace, old man!

I have a prior claim. Before the face
Of man and Heaven I urge it; I outbid
You sordid hackster for your priceless jewel.

(Giving a pocket-book.)
There is the sum twice told! Blush not to take
it:

There's not a coin that is not bought and hal-
low'd

In the cause of nations with a soldier's blood!

"*Beau.* Torments and death!"

Pauline (R.) That voice! Thou art—

Mel. (C.) Thy husband!

(*Pauline* rushes into his arms.)

Look up! Look up, *Pauline*!—for I can bear
Thine eyes! The stain is blotted from my name.

I have redeem'd mine honour. I can call

On France to sanction thy divine forgiveness!

Oh, joy!—Oh, rapture! By the midnight watch-
fires

Thus have I seen thee! thus foretold this hour!

And 'midst the roar of battle, thus have heard
The beating of thy heart against my own!

Beau. (L.) Fool'd, duped, and triumph'd over
in the hour

Of mine own victory! Curses on ye both!

May thorns be planted in the marriage-bed!

And love grow sour'd and blacken'd into hate,
Such as the hate that gnaws me!

Damas (L. C.) Curse away!

And let me tell thee, *Beausant*, a wise proverb
The Arabs have,—“Curses are like young
chickens,

(Solemnly.) And still come home to roost!”

Beau. Their happiness

Maddens my soul! I am powerless and revenge-
less!

(To *Madame*)

I wish you joy! Ha! ha! The gardener's son!

[Exit C. to L.]

Damas (to *Glavis*.) Your friend intends to hang
himself! Methinks

You ought to be his travelling companion!

Glavis. Sir, you are exceedingly obliging!

[Exit C. to L.]

Pauline. Oh!

My father, you are saved,—and by my husband!
Ah, blessed hour!

Mel. Yet you weep still, *Pauline*!

Pauline. But on thy breast!—these tears are
sweet and holy!

Mons. Deschap. You have won love and honour
nobly, Sir!

Take her;—be happy both!

Madame Deschap. I'm all astonished!

Who, then, is Colonel Morier?

Damas. You behold him!

Mel. Morier no more after this happy day!

I would not bear again my father's name

Till I could deem it spotless! The hour's come!
Heaven smiled on Conscience! As the soldier
rose

From rank to rank, how sacred was the fame

That cancell'd crime, and raised him nearer thee!

Madame Deschap. A colonel and a hero! Well,
that's something!

He's wondrously improved. I wish you joy, Sir!

Mel. Ah! the same love that tempts us into
sin,

If it be true love, works out its redemption;

And he who seeks repentance for the Past

Shall woo the Angel Virgine in the future!

MADAME. CLAUDE. PAULINE.

DESCHAP.

DAMAS.

R

L

*On the stage the following lines are added:
(Aside.) The night is past—joy cometh with the
morrow. (Aloud.)

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